Forests along Eastern Ghats

*412. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the 150 km. stretch of Niligiri type canopy and deciduous forests along the Eastern Ghat, is threatened by the exploitation of large bauxite reserves of over 200 million tonnes estimated to be lying underground there; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to ensure preservation of the forests and the eco-system while exploiting the bauxite reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) No, Sir. Approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes including for bauxite mining is accorded after considering all the relevant aspects including likely effect of mining on flora and fauna.

(b) Does not arise.

Release of Terrorists/Militants in Jammu and Kashmir

*413. SHRI RAM RATAN RAM:

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of terrorists and militants released by Government to secure the release of those kidnapped by terrorists in Kashmir Valley during the years 1989, 1990, 19991 and so far in 1992; and

(b) the number of persons kidnapped by the militants and anti-social elements in the Kashmir Valley during the same period?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) (b) It would not be in the public interest to disclose this information.

Increase in rates of DTC Students Passes

*414. DR. ABRAR AHMED:

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Delhi Transport Corporation proposes to effect a steep hike in the rates of students' but passes;

(b) if so, what is the percentage of rise in the rates of such passes; and

(c) whether there has been any agitation by students' Union against the proposed hike and if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c) The Delhi Transport Corporation has sent a proposal to the Government for revising the rate of all route students bus passes to 25 per cent of the rate of general all route passes. DTC have also submitted certain other proposals for plugging loopholes and preventing abuse of the system of student concessional passes.

Some Students Unions have voiced their objections against the proposals.

No final decision has been taken by Government on the proposals.

Rail Bridge over Hooghly River

*415. SHRI MD. SALIM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal for the construction of a new rail